

LAWS PERTAINING TO BAIT DEALERS AND USE OF LIVE BAIT FISH

Live bait fish restrictions. The following are legal bait fish for fishing: smelt, lake chub, eastern silvery minnow, golden shiner, emerald shiner, bridle shiner, blacknose shiner, common shiner, spottail shiner, northern redbelly dace, finescale dace, fathead minnow, blacknose dace, longnose dace, creek chub, fallfish, pearl dace, banded killifish, mummichog, longnose sucker, white sucker, creek chub sucker and American eel. Any species of fish not listed above may not be used as bait for fishing in inland waters.

Importation of bait fish prohibited. It is unlawful to import any live bait fish or smelts into Maine.

Bait Dealer's license. It is unlawful for any person to deal in live bait fish or live smelts without first obtaining a valid dealer's license. For further information, contact IF&W (NOTE: A person may take live bait fish for their own use, by the use of hook and line or bait trap only, if that person holds a valid fishing license.)

Permit to take bait fish from closed waters. Any person (except licensed bait dealers who receive a permit upon issuance of a license) who wishes to take live bait fish from inland waters which are NOT CURRENTLY OPEN to fishing must first obtain a written permit from this Department. There is no charge for this permit. (NOTE: No permit is required to take bait fish from inland waters open to fishing.)

Bait fish traps to be marked. All bait fish traps and bait fish holding boxes must be marked with the name and address of the person who is taking or holding the bait fish.

Checking bait fish traps. All bait fish traps must be checked at least once every 7 calendar days by the person who set them.

Storing live bait fish. Live bait fish may not be stored or held in any waters where the use or possession of live fish as bait is prohibited during the entire ice fishing or the entire open water fishing season. This includes waters restricted to the use of artificial lures only, waters restricted to fly fishing, and where there are other prohibitions on the use of live fish as bait. To obtain a list of Maine waters where bait fish cannot be stored please contact IFW's Augusta Office, or visit IFW's website: www.mefishwildlife.com.

Marking holes. When using drop nets to fish through the ice for bait fish/smelts, all holes made in the ice MUST BE MARKED either by evergreen boughs placed around the hole, or by suspending at least 1 strand of fluorescent biodegradable tape at least 3 feet above the ice around the entire perimeter of the hole so that the tape is visible from all sides.